

“RRAFT ADVISORY COMMITTEE” MEETING 17 SUMMARY

Monday, August 25, 2008

6:30 – 9:00 PM

Missoula FWP Headquarters

3201 Spurgin Road

Missoula

- **Opening and Agenda Overview**
-Charlie Sperry ~ FWP Recreation Management Specialist
- **Discussion of Reach 3 Management Actions (continued)**
 - The committee continued its discussion on management actions for Reach 3 (Harry Morgan to Russell Gates). At the last meeting two members of the committee identified restrictions on launches as a management action that should be considered for implementation right away in Reach 3 as a way of addressing crowding and user conflicts. At the close of that meeting it was apparent that more discussion was needed to clarify what it means to restrict the number of launches in the context of this section of the river. At the August 25th meeting the committee discussed the management action within the context of the following questions:
 - Who would the restriction apply to?
 - What problem(s) would the restriction correct?
 - When does the restriction apply?
 - How would the restriction affect use and improve conditions?
 - The committee generated the following comments pertaining to a restriction on the number of launches:
 - Clarification that the restriction would apply to the number of launches allowed per person per day, not the total number of launches allowed per day.
 - Observation that most private individuals (non-commercial) only launch once per day anyway and therefore this type of restriction would mainly affect the commercial users who launch more than one boat per day.
 - Angler crowding on a small water body is intensive and outfitters launching 5-7 boats really impact the experience.
 - Specific data would be needed to support this type of restriction.
 - The group size limit for Reach 3 is 21 and that size limit does not protect the quality of the experience.
 - Congestion occurs seasonally from mid to late June.
 - The level of crowding is variable and dependent upon conditions (weather, hatches and time of year. During the rest of the time conditions are not that bad.
 - A maximum number of launches should be determined to protect the quality of the experience.
 - We need to consider the impact of the recreational use on the fishery and the resource.
 - There is disagreement about the significance of impacts related to hook scarring in fish.

- Commercial use makes up roughly 10% of total use annually in Reach 3. Use is not spread evenly throughout the year. Instead, it increases and decreases depending upon conditions.
- If there are too many people then we should restrict use. Like it or not there are too many people on the river.
- Do Commercial users perceive a crowding problem? Does it impact their business?
- Some outfitters do spread out people and clients and most commercial users are conscientious but there has not been a concerted effort to self-regulate.
- The Fishing Outfitter's Association of Montana (FOAM) has developed concepts that could address how the fishing outfitter industry could self-regulate prior to agency rationing.
- The problem of crowding was identified 10 years ago and meaningful action has not been taken. We can't wait for more data to be collected.

-Following their discussion, the committee did not come to consensus on a recommendation to restrict launches per person per day immediately. Instead, the committee supported the idea of continuing the discussion on launch restrictions as a part of the larger discussion on conditions that would trigger the implementation of additional management actions in the future. At the conclusion of this meeting, the following items remain on the list of management actions that the committee is considering for immediate implementation in Reach 3 to address crowding and user conflict: onsite self-registration, limiting parking at access sites, enhancing information and educational messages, and redesigning access sites.

- ***Small Group Exercise: Developing Trigger Points for Future Management Actions in Reach 3 and Reach 6.***

-The committee divided into two groups to discuss trigger points (conditions that would "trigger" the implementation of additional management actions). One group began to develop triggers for Reach 3 and the other began to develop triggers for Reach 6. Committee members selected a group based upon familiarity and/or interest in a particular reach.

- ***Meeting Wrap-up***

The two groups asked for more time at the next meeting to continue the discussion on trigger points for reaches 3 and 6.

- ***Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM***

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, September 9, 2008

6:00 pm* – 9:00 pm

FWP Region 2 Headquarters

3201 Spurgin Road

Missoula

* Note early start time!